(e) Gauge conversion of 885 km in Tamil Nadu have been completed out of a total gauge conversion of 8437 km in the whole country since 1992-93, when Project Unigauge was launched.

Higher Expenditure on Operating Trains

†1808. DR. D. MASTHAN:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that expenditure incurred on the operation of the trains is more in comparison to that being incurred at international level;

(b) if so, the average trains operation expenditure in the country and at international level; and

(c) the reasons for the higher operation expenditure in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) Average train operating expenditure in terms of average cost of haulage of a coaching train and a goods train, per train kilometre, on Indian Railways is as follows:

(*Figures in Rs.*)

Year	Coaching Train	Goods Train
1996-97	250.26	473.26
1997-98	311.71	573.55
1998-99	321.48	630.60

Similar information concerning other railways is not available. As such, no comments can be offered on relative cost performance.

Reorganisation of RUCCS

1809. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that, of late, there are no closer ties between the Railways and the Rail users in the country and the facilities for the Rail users have been curtailed substantially;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

†Original Notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the steps Government have taken so far or propose to take for reorganisation of the National Zonal and Divisional Rail Users' Consultative Committees so as to resume the Rail facilities and to benefit the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH):.(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Zonal Railway Users' Consultative Committees and Divisional Railway Users Consultative Committees have been reconstituted for a two year term with effect from 1.1. 2000. National Railway Users' Consultative Council is being reconstituted with effect from 1.4.2000.

Rail linking of Barh-Kondi-Ajgara-Barbigha-Shekhpura

1810. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to link Barh-Kondi-Ajgara- Barbigha-Shekhpura by rail, in view of the uttar absence of any viable mode of transportation in said area;

(b) if so, whether Government would take up this project during the current/next financial year;

(c) if so, the details in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d) No, Sir. However, there is a proposal for construction of a new line from Daniawan to Shekhpura *via* Chandi, Bihar Sharief and Barbigha, of which Barbigha to Shekhpura is common with the line requested for. Final decision has not yet been taken.

Laying of Rail Line between Kottur and Harihar

1811. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether survey has been conducted for laying of new railway line between Kottur and Harihar in Karnataka;

(b) if so, what is the estimated cost of the above project;